

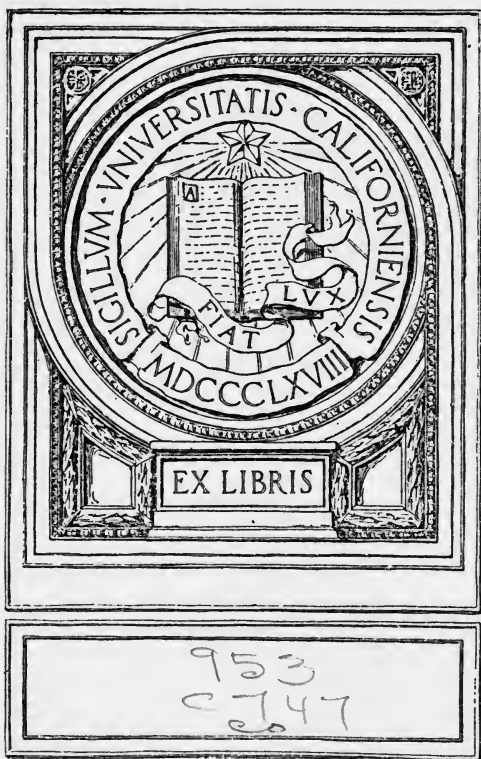
THE COAT  
WITHOUT A SEAM  
AND OTHER POEMS

Helen Gray Cone

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THE  
COAT WITHOUT A SEAM  
*And Other Poems*

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A CHANT OF LOVE FOR ENGLAND  
AND OTHER POEMS

---

A volume of miscellaneous poems containing as its title poem a reply to the German "Hymn of Hate."

"Firmly and finely fashioned, and unaffectedly sincere."

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*And Other Poems*

BY

HELEN GRAY CONE

AUTHOR OF "A CHANT OF LOVE FOR ENGLAND,  
AND OTHER POEMS"



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**THE COAT WITHOUT A  
SEAM**





## THE COAT WITHOUT A SEAM

THERE was a web, ere Time began,  
Woven on the loom of God,  
Woven for the need of Man.  
Through the web two colors ran,  
Blue that is the sky of God,  
Red that is the blood of Man.  
The web was woven, the web was one:  
The stars sang when the work was done.

God had willed it to be worn—  
Fit garment for the heavenly feast—  
By Man, that was to be His son.  
Only God could dream that dream!  
When Time began, and Man was born,

THE COAT WITHOUT A SEAM

He clothed himself in the skin of the beast,  
And under it beat the heart of the beast.  
Not till Man be born God's son  
Shall he wear the Coat without a Seam!

(Ah, the dream, the wondrous dream  
Of a World without a Seam,  
Man being one, as God is one,  
Brother's brother and Father's son,  
All earth, all Heaven, without a seam!)

The Roman strode through field and flood,  
Blind as Fate with battle-blood;  
Victory glittered in his hand;  
And when he laid him down at night  
Under the stars of some strange land,  
Weary of the march or fight,  
He wrapped his heart in the vast dream  
Of a World without a Seam;



Yet the dream was not divine;  
The fierce heart beat like marching feet:  
"The World is one—the World is mine!"  
That was the dream of states foregone,  
Of Babylon, of Macedon;  
Sleeked by whatsoever art,  
It is the dream of the beast's heart.  
Massive-treading Rome paced on  
(As Macedon, as Babylon,)   
Into the dusk of states foregone:  
She left her mantle still astream  
Along the wind, her purple dream—  
Not the Coat without a Seam!  
The eyes of emperors see it float,  
They hail it for the sacred Coat:  
Men follow on through field and flood,  
Blind as Fate with battle-blood.  
See the sworded sceptred train,  
Out of the dusk they all advance:

Iron-crownéd Charlemagne,  
Barbarossa flaming past,  
Sombre majesties of Spain,  
Pomps of old monarchic France—  
Supreme Napoleon last,  
Sweeping his ermine-bordered robe  
And gripping fast the globe.  
(Nay, who is this that follows him,  
A vision helmeted and grim,  
A countenance pallid and aghast?)  
—Into the dusk they all are gone,  
As Babylon, as Macedon.  
Not till Man shall dream God's dream  
Shall he wear the Coat without a Seam!

(Ah, the dream, the wondrous dream  
Of a World without a Seam!  
Man being one, as God is one,  
Brother's brother and Father's son,  
All earth, all Heaven without a seam!)

“What shall we do, we simple folk  
Who walk as cattle in the yoke?  
Surely the vision of this Coat—  
Fit garment for the heavenly feast—  
Is for prophet and for priest,  
Not for men of little note!  
Surely the quest to find this Coat—  
Woven of empyrean thread  
Heaven-blue and heart-red—  
This is for Kings and Chancellors,  
Parliaments and Emperors,  
Not for men of little note!”  
—Nay, this do ye every one:  
All your days to dream God’s dream,  
That Man, who is to be His son,  
Shall wear the Coat without a Seam!



**SONNETS OF THE GREAT  
PEACE**



## SONNETS OF THE GREAT PEACE

"Incertainties now crown themselves assured  
And peace proclaims olives of endless age."

—SHAKESPEARE'S *Sonnet CVII.*

### I

WHAT boon is this, this fresh and crystal  
thing,

Perfect as snow, dropped from the deep  
of the sky—

This healing, shed as from the soft swift  
wing

Of some great mystical bird low-sweep-  
ing by?

This music suddenly thrilling through the  
mind

Angelic unimagined ecstasy,

As when warm fingers of the Spring unbind  
Young brooks that laugh and leap, at  
last being free?

By what white magic, what unfathomed art,

Was this best gift secretly perfected,

This amulet, that laid against the heart

Melts all the icy weight that held it dead?

*This is that Peace we had and did not know;*

*This is that Peace we lost—how long ago!*

## II

Shall we not now work wonders with this  
charm,

To the vext heart of the world benignly  
laid,



Fending all future golden lads from harm,  
And all gray mothers, and every starry  
maid?

Yea, all kind beasts that ask with patient eyes  
Our wisdom to forestall bewildering pain:  
Yea, all kind fields, trees rippling to the  
skies,

Brown earth sweet-breathing under  
natural rain.

Shall we not now, being freed, being healed  
of Peace,

Retrieve all days to be from blot and  
blight,

Give to the chained goodwill of Man release,  
And a new deed of manumission write  
On a new page, made by this marvellous  
boon

Pure as unfooted snow under the moon?

## III

How did we cast away our careless days  
In that old time before we knew their  
worth,  
Wandering with chance, even as a child that  
strays,  
Spilling their unprized splendors on the  
earth!  
But now we have eaten War as daily bread,  
Borne it upon our souls a weary weight,  
Made it the pillow to a restless head,  
Breathed it as air, sick with the reek of  
hate:  
And Peace is come a stranger, and grave-  
eyed,  
Like a young maid turned woman; on our  
knees

We do her reverence as a spirit enskyed;  
How should we spend such shining days  
as these?  
They have cost great pain: needs must we  
hold them dear,  
Counting our jewels with a heavenly fear.

## IV

Ghosts of great flags that billowed in the  
sun  
With glorious colors above the crowded  
street,  
Lifting our hearts to know the rent world  
one,  
Teaching the march of Man to hurrying  
feet,  
Shall ye not haunt those skyward spaces still

With memory of your sun-illuminated  
streaming,  
Bright brother-angels heralding goodwill,  
Beckoners of sordid spirits to noble  
dreaming?  
Or shall your many beauteous blazonries  
Fade out from the dulled sense and be  
forgot,  
And intimations so august as these  
Lapse into silence even as they were not,  
Comrades turn rivals, and heart-fast allies  
Weavers of schemes, peering with insect  
eyes?

## V

What shame were this to those who lie  
asleep  
Under the scarlet poppies, having bought

[A] clean new world with blood! Shall we  
not keep

Faith with our dead, and give them what  
they sought?

Is not a world the measure of our debt  
To those whose young lives sadly we  
inherit,

Living them out, making them fruitful yet?  
What lesser meed fits their transcendent  
merit?

The future was their sacrificial gift,

And joy unborn, and beauty uncreate,

And little children that should racing lift

Their torch of life, laughing at death and  
fate:

Shall we not make, mindful of all they gave,

[A] star of this old earth which is their grave?



# MOODS OF WAR





## THE SWORD

ONE of the seventy had a sword

The day that Christ was crucified:

He followed where they led his Lord,

The man that could not stand aside.

When that first hammer-stroke rang loud,

And left and right the rabble swayed,

He flashed from out the staring crowd,

He died upon the Roman blade.

His fruitless deed, his noteless **name**,

By careless Rome were never told.

Now shall we give him praise or blame?

Account him base, acclaim him bold?

Was he the traitor to his Lord,  
Deeper than Peter that denied,  
The loving soul that took the sword,  
The man that would not stand aside?

Or did the glorious company  
Of Michael's sworded seraphim  
With chivalrous high courtesy  
Rise up to make a place for him?

## ALIGNED

WHY do you leap in the wind so wild,  
O Star-Flag, O Sky-Flag?

And why do you ripple as if you smiled,  
Flag of my heart's delight?

"I laugh because I am loosed at last,  
Free of the cords that bound me fast  
Mute as a mummy, furled on the mast,  
Far from the beckoning fight!

"I joy because I am aligned—  
The Star-Flag, the Sky-Flag—  
With these the noblest of my kind,  
Flags of the soul's desire!

And where the blended Crosses blaze,  
And where the Tricolor lifts and sways  
To the marching pulse of the Marseillaise,  
I may be tried in the fire!"

Yea, not for gold and not for ease,  
My Star-Flag, my Sky-Flag,  
The Fathers launched you on the breeze,  
Flag of man's best emprise!  
Yea, not for power and not for greed,  
But to fly forever, follow or lead,  
For the world's hope and the world's need,  
Flower of all seas and all skies!

And better you were a riddled rag,  
My Star-Flag, my Sky-Flag,  
The faded ghost of a fighting-flag,  
Shredded, and scorched with flame,

Than that you should now be satisfied  
Over splendid cities and waters wide  
To flutter and float in an idle pride,  
To flaunt in a silken shame!

Then well may you leap in the wind so wild,  
O Star-Flag, O Sky-Flag!

And well may you ripple as if you smiled,  
Flag of our hearts' delight!

We joy because you are aligned

With these the noblest of your kind:

We are yours and theirs with a single  
mind—

Let us on to the beckoning fight!

## EARTH-BROWN ARMIES

EARTH-BROWN armies, on the brown earth  
whither,

Ant-like swarming, rush ye in your wrath?

—We wrestle and we tug and we pull all  
together

To shift the giant Dead Thing that lies  
across the path.

Earth-brown armies, but should it roll and  
smother,

Log-like topple; and crush you in the clod?

—Earth would pour new armies, one be-  
hind another,

To shift the giant Dead Thing that blocks  
the way of God!

## THE IMPERATIVE

WHETHER we lose the light  
Of love or of the sun,  
With body and blood and mind and might  
Must this sole thing be done:

The world is a broken ball,  
Stained red because it fell  
Out of bounds, in a game of kings,  
Over the wall of hell:

And now must the spirit of man  
Arise and adventure all—  
Leap the wall sheer down into hell  
And bring up the broken ball.

Worth well, to lose the light  
Of love or of the sun,  
Worth endless fire or endless night,  
So this sole thing were done!



## WAR-SACRIFICE

ON a rock-altar stern  
In sacrificial fires,  
A man goes up to burn  
His memories and desires.

Sweet savors of the earth,  
All innocence and ease,  
All pleasantness and mirth,  
He offers on his knees.

His trembling, star-white dreams;  
His body's secret fear;  
His life—how dear it seems,  
How knit with lives more dear!

Last offering, and most dread—  
With blind arms thrust above  
His bowed and suffering head,  
He burns his brother-love:

Yet from that altar springs,  
Magnificently bright,  
A Love with fiery wings  
To fill the world with light.

## THE YOUTH AND WAR

SHE said, "I will hide all the brave books  
away from him,

With their scarlet letters that burn into  
the heart;

I will lock their spell and their sovereign  
sway from him;

I will rear him tenderly, a life apart."

But the day came and the hour came,

'And the foul deed struck him like a  
spur;

'And he felt the shame and the swift  
flame,

And his eyes were strange to her.

In the dreams of the night had the old  
Captains come to him,  
And the staunch old Admirals that died  
long ago;  
From the old fields of fight came the roll  
of the drum to him,  
With a call that his mother could not know;  
It seemed that a Sword gleamed  
blinding-bright  
At the dawn-edge of the sky;  
And he said, "O Mother, the Right is  
the Right:  
I must fight for it now though I die!"

## MOTHERS OF SOLDIERS

WHAT should we say to you, O glorious  
Mothers

Sacred and full of sorrows, we childless  
ones?

We kneel to you as haloed women, we  
others,

The slighter lives that could not give their  
sons.

Not ours the exquisite anguish of surrender,  
The deep, still courage that day by day  
endures,

The rosary of memories piercing-tender,  
The travail and the triumph that are  
yours.

The agony and the glory of creation

You have partaken; in that steep way you  
trod

You have made yourselves part of the  
world's salvation,

You have shared the passion and the joy  
of God.

With splendor of sunrise and the surging  
morn,

Out of your pain shall Man be newly born.

## A REPRISAL

AT the deep midnight hour  
Sleep, that makes all things whole,  
Indulged my tortured soul.  
In the jewel-chest of dreams  
He stirred the elusive gleams,  
And found the gift of power,  
Round, pure, and perfect power,  
And laid it in my hand.

I said: "I have command  
Of the Prince of the Power of the Air;  
His own wings will I wear!  
I will soar as a great hell-kite  
To be named The Terror-by-Night,  
Over mine enemy's land."

At the thought, I rode the sky,  
High over the sea, and high  
Over field and city and spire;  
I laughed; I had my desire.  
For I came to mine enemy's roof,  
Safe in a valley aloof,  
And I knew, as I poised above,  
There lay his Hope and his Love,  
The twain that he held most dear,  
Nestled with cheeks together,  
Roses in summer weather,  
Sleeping without a fear.  
Gray Memory, close beside,  
Couched her old, kindly head.  
It was mine to strike them dead,  
Even as mine own had died.

I cried with a great voice,  
To mine enemy I cried;



"Come forth, come forth, to hear!  
Look up, look up, to see!  
Lo, what is in my choice!  
This deed of black disgrace,  
This have you done to me;  
This might I do to you;  
Yet this I would not do,  
Yea, this I could not do!  
Let the knowledge smite your pride  
Like a gauntlet in the face!"

Mine enemy stood in his gate:  
He was sadder than I had thought.  
I hated what he had wrought,  
But him I could not hate.  
His eyes were startled wide.  
What would he have replied?  
I know not. Ere he spoke,  
The merciless morning broke.

Hawkers in sunny streets  
Shrilled triumphs and defeats,  
Sold horrors and despairs.  
Bells called the world to prayers.

## ON THE DEATH OF AN UNTRIED SOLDIER.

*"He was likely, had he been put on,  
To have proved most royally; and for his passing  
The soldiers' music and the rites of war  
Speak loudly for him."—HAMLET.*

HE died in armor, died with lance in rest.  
The trumpet had not sounded for the  
charge;  
Yet shall his guerdon of golden fame be  
large,  
For he was ready; he had met his test.

No sacrifice is more complete and clean  
Than that in the locked soul, secret and  
still.

Take for a visible deed the perfect will;  
Crown with sad pride the accomplishment  
unseen.

Hang his bright arms undinted on the wall.

In all brave colors whereto his dreams  
aspired

Blazon his blank shield as his heart  
desired,

And write above: "*The readiness is all.*"

## THE AIRMAN

SPLENDOR of chivalrous Youth, swift-soar-  
ing far

In valorous venture of eagle-battle on high  
Fate of a falling star—

Nay! a new Star in the sky!

## TO FRANCIS LEDWIDGE

(Killed in action, July 31, 1917)

BEAUTY's boy-servant, far in Flanders dead,  
There shoots across the sea a shaft of  
pain

To think you are gone—a memory gar-  
landed

With wilding flowers plucked in an Irish  
lane.

'Your songs were like sweet waters to the  
throat,

Or tenderness and freshness of young  
leaves;

Surely the blackbird checks his laughing note,  
And for your loss the dripping rainbow  
grieves.

With Brooke you are gone, with Grenfell,  
on high ways

Lost to our sense, beyond the chance of  
wrong;

Singers fall silent in these thunderous days,  
But their bright death is radiance and a  
song.

—God send kind sleep to those clear Irish  
eyes

That saw the old earth still dewy with  
surprise!

## THE WAY OF THE WHITE SOULS

(To the Memory of JOYCE KILMER, killed in action,  
July 30, 1918)

I STOOD in the summer night, when the hosts  
    of heaven seemed nigh,  
And I saw the powdery swirl of stars, where  
    it swept across the sky,  
The wide way of the white stars, where it  
    ran up and down,  
And my heart was sad for the man who said  
    *It was Main Street, Heaventown.*

He chose to walk in the Main Street, in the  
    wide ways of men;  
He set wings to the common things with the  
    kind touch of his pen;



He caught the lilt of the old tune that the  
    hearts of the plain folk beat;  
He might have dreamed on the far faint  
    hills—but he walked in the Main Street.

He knelt down with his fellows, in the warm  
    faith of the throng;  
He went forth with his fellows to fight a  
    monstrous Wrong;  
He marched away to the true tune that the  
    hearts of brave men beat,  
Shoulder to brown shoulder, with the men  
    in the Main Street.

A road runs bright through the night of  
    Time, since ever the world began,  
The wide Way of the White Souls, the Main  
    Street of Man,

The sky-road of the star-souls, beyond all  
wars and scars;  
And there the singing soul of him goes on  
with the marching stars.

So, as I stand in the summer night, when the  
hosts of heaven seem nigh,  
And look at the powdery swirl of stars,  
where it sweeps across the sky,  
The wide way of the white stars, where it  
runs up and down,  
My heart shall be glad for the friend who  
said *It was Main Street, Heaventown.*

## RESPITE

O BEAUTY, heal my heart! I lean to thee,  
Faint, having supped with horrors: give  
me drink!

—Red slopes beneath tall pines, ranged  
tree on tree;

Long cool gray lakes, with iris round the  
brink

In knightly companies purple and proud;  
Birches as altar-candles slender and  
white;

A late gold sun, traced curiously with cloud;  
The spacious splendors of the moon-filled  
night;

Among the wild-rose crowds, the perfect  
one;

White sea-gulls like white lilies, on brown  
bars

That slant athwart blue bays; gulls in the  
sun

Rising as galaxies of trembling stars:  
Lull me awhile, O Beauty, drug my dread!  
—To-morrow morn War stands beside my  
bed.

## HAPPY COUNTRY

HERE by the bright blue creek the good  
ships lie

A-building, and the hammers beat and  
beat,

And the wood-smell is pleasant in the  
heat;

The strong rills curve against the marsh and  
sky.

Here the old men are mowing in the sun,  
And the hay-sweetness blends with the  
wild-rose;

At the field's edge the scarlet lily glows;  
The great clouds sail, and the swift shadows  
run,

And the broad undulant meadows gloom and  
smile;

Over the russet red-top warm winds pass,  
The swallow swoops and swerves, the  
cattle stand

In the cool of shallow brooks—and all the  
while

Peace basks asleep, she dreams of some  
sad land

Leagues over sea, where youth is mown as  
grass.

## TO FRANCE

SWEET France, we greet thee with our  
cheers, our tears,

Our tardy swords! O sternly, wanly fair  
In that red martyr-aureole thou dost  
wear!

Even for the sake of our bright pioneers,  
Chapman, and Seeger, and such dear dead  
peers

Of thy dead sons, joyous and swift to dare  
All fiery danger of the earth and air,  
Forgive us, France, our hesitating years!

Quenchless as thine own spirit is our trust  
That thou shalt spring resurgent, like the  
brave

Pure plume of Bayard, from the blood and  
dust

Of this grim combat-to-the-utterance,

Fresh as the foambow of the charging  
wave,

O plume of Europe, proud and delicate  
France!



## TO BELGIUM

### CROWNED WITH THORNS

THOU that a brave, brief space didst keep  
the gate

Against the German, saving all the West  
By the subjection of thy shielding breast  
To the brute blows and utmost shames of  
Fate;

Thou that in bonds of iron dost expiate  
Thy nobleness as crime! Even thus  
oppressed,

Is not thy spirit mystically blest,  
O little Belgium, marvellously great?

Thou that hast prized the soul above the  
flesh,

Dost thou not, starving, eat of angels'  
bread?

With every sunrise crucified afresh,  
Has not this guerdon for all time sufficed—  
That thou shouldst wear upon thy hag-  
gard head  
The awful honor of the Crown of Christ?

## THE CREED OF AN AMERICAN

IN God our Father, and in all men's  
Sonship;

In Brother-love and breaking down of  
barriers;

In Law that is the just will of the People  
Shaped, and still shaping, to the People's  
need;

In equal Freedom and in equal Service,  
Duties and Rights: in all these I believe.

In these great States bound in a greater  
Union,

Many in One, the framework of the Fathers,  
Nobly devised, a forecast of the future

When all the Nations gather in God's fold;  
The great Experiment, the high Adventure,  
The captain Hope: in all this I believe.

In this bright Flag of Liberty and Union:  
Its red, the symbol of the blood of brothers  
That flows through men of every race and  
nation;  
Its white, the symbol of the peace between  
them  
That shall be when God's Will has wrought  
as leaven;  
Its stars, the symbol of many Powers that  
move  
Clustering together without clash or conflict,  
In the deep blue of the vast, tender sky  
That is the all-enfolding mantle of God—  
With my whole soul in all these I believe.

That I in peace must show my true allegiance  
To this bright Flag, this constellated Union,  
By square-done work and clean unselfish  
living;

That I in war must show my true  
allegiance—

While war shall linger in this world to  
threaten

Such Sanctities as these—even by my  
dying:

In all this I believe. Amen. Amen.

## THE ULTIMATE VICTORY

[As men that labor in a mountain war—

Scaling sheer cliffs, hewing out stairs of  
stone,

Trenching the ice, quenching the torrent's  
roar

With rolling thunders in the gorges lone—  
Having seized a height, might stand with  
dazzled stare,

Seeing, beyond, a highest heavenly peak  
Hung lucent as a cloud in the bright air,

Still to be won: O thus, even thus, we  
seek

Peace beyond War! and thus the Vision  
gleams

Upon us battling, that snow-crest sublime,

That holy mountain, that pure crown of  
dreams,

Toward which Man's soul has struggled  
up through Time.

In blood and sweat we war that War may  
cease;

And storming the last peak, we conquer  
Peace.

ROOSEVELT, 1919

How shall we say "God rest him!"  
Of him who loved not rest,  
But the pathless plunge in the forest  
And the pauseless quest,  
And the call of the billowing mountains,  
Crest beyond crest?

Hope rather, God will give him  
His spirit's need—  
Rapture of ceaseless motion  
That is rest indeed,  
As the cataract sleeps on the cliff-side  
White with speed.



So shall his soul go ranging  
Forever, swift and wide,  
With a strong man's rejoicing,  
As he loved to ride;  
But all our days are poorer  
For the part of him that died.



# THE QUIET DAYS



## OLD BURYING HILL

THIS is a place that has forgotten tears.

The scythe and hour-glass and the skull  
and bones

Have lost their menace on the marred  
gray stones.

The long grass flows, still as the stream of  
years.

The goldenrod leans low her dreaming head.

Under the loving sun and the warm sky

These lichen'd letters tell an outworn lie,  
A slander of good Death, discredited.

A drowsy cricket harps; and do but see!

With mystic orbs upon his dusky wing,

Here goes about his airy harvesting

Our little Brother Immortality.

Lost is their title, those gaunt Fears of yore:

Beauty has made this crown-land evermore.

## HEARTBREAK ROAD

As I went up by Heartbreak Road  
Before the dawn of day,  
The cold mist was all about,  
And the wet world was gray;  
It seemed that never another soul  
Had walked that weary way.

But when I came to Heartbreak Hill,  
Silver touched the sea;  
I knew that many and many a soul  
Was climbing close to me;  
I knew I walked that weary way  
In a great company.

## ROMANCE

"Good cheap! Good cheap! Buy my golden  
ware!

Sunny-afternoon-color, happy-harvest-moon-  
color,

Burnished bright as Beauty's golden hair!

O come buy!

Buy my rare golden ware!"

[But they never came anigh him, they went  
trooping by him,

To trade at the shop of Despair—

At the dark little shop of Despair!]

"Good cheap! Good cheap! Buy my magic  
ware!

[All your meat shall savor of it, all your  
drink take flavor of it,

Yea, 'twill warm ye when the hearth is bare!

O come buy!

Buy my fair golden ware!"

(But they hurried past the turning, with  
their fixed eyes burning,

Making haste to be cheated by Despair—

Buying dear at the counter of Despair!)



## FAITH

BEFORE the rose and violet had begun  
On sky and sea, while all the world was  
still,  
Colorless, lifeless, unconsoled, and chill,  
One little bird sang out about the Sun.

## INTIMATIONS

"Who has seen the Wind?"—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

I HAVE seen the Wind,  
I have seen him plain—  
The silver feet of the Wind  
Racing on the rain.

I have seen Time pass:  
Viewless as he sped,  
The red sand in the glass  
Was shaken by his tread.

Far, far the goal,  
And hearts must part awhile—  
But I have seen the Soul  
Shining through a smile.

Dim, dim the plan,  
And dumb is the clod:  
But in the eyes of Man  
I have seen—God.

ON THE SINGING  
OF "GAUDEAMUS IGITUR"

HARK, how Youth, a scholar gowned,  
With the cap of Wisdom crowned,  
Carols like the reckless lark,  
Forgetful of the dark!

What is toil, oh, what are tears?  
Time turns pale when thus he hears  
Angelic insolence of sound  
Scorning the beaten ground.

In the face of Fate is flung  
This gage-gauntlet of the young—  
Innocent brave challenge, hurled  
In the teeth of the world!

Graybeard Years file solemn past;  
Yet this rebel glee shall last  
Long as souls at morning rise,  
New larks, to the old skies.

## THE COUNTERSIGN

ON guard my heavy Heart did stand,  
And sleep had conquered her,  
Had not one cold and rigid hand  
Gripped honor like a spur.

It was the starkest watch of all,  
The hour before the end.  
Out rang the startled challenge-call:  
"Halt! Who goes there?" "A Friend."

"The countersign?" my spent Heart cried,  
And forward-peering stood.  
A Voice as strange as sweet replied:  
"The word is BROTHERHOOD."

## FAILURE TRIUMPHANT

How many a captain wave, since sea began,  
Has lordly led the charge against the  
shore,

Whose crest a jewelled plume of rainbow  
bore,

As iris Hope arches the march of Man:

How many a wave, brave-glittering in the  
van,

Has melted as a cloud in spray and roar—

A flashing column prone, and next, no  
more!

So runs the tale, since Time's first sand  
outran.

So ends the antique tale. Stay! ends it so?  
Though every billow faint into a ghost,  
The all-embracing ocean—that gives  
birth,  
Receives, and recreates—in ebb and flow,  
A vast sky-coupled Mystery round the  
coast,  
Works out its will upon the face of  
earth.



## THE SPARK

*Readers of riddles dark,  
Solve me the mystery of the Spark!*

My good dog died yesternight.  
His heart of love through his eyes of light  
Had looked out kind his whole life long.  
In all his days he had done no wrong.  
Like a knight's was his noble face.  
What shall I name the inward grace  
That leashed and barred him from all things  
base?

Selfless trust and courage high—  
Dust to dust, but are these to die?

[(Hate and lust and greed and lies—  
Dust to dust, and are these to rise?)]

*When 'tis kindled, whither it goes,  
Whether it fades, or glows and grows—  
Readers of riddles dark,  
Solve me the mystery of the Spark!*

## FOXGLOVES

PINK-PURPLE foxgloves

Leaning to the breeze—

And all the sweet of Devon

Sweeps back across the seas:

The deep coombs of Devon

Where the tiny hamlets nest,

The golden sea of Devon

That glimmers toward the west:

The thatched roofs of Devon

To which the soft skies bend—

Now the dear God keep Devon

The same to His world's end!

## THE CHRISTMAS BAGPIPES

I HEARD on Christmas Eve the bonny bag-  
pipes play;  
The thin silver skirling, it sounded far away;  
The yellow mellow light shone through my  
neighbor's panes,  
And on the starry night came the shrill dear  
strains.

Despite the welter of the wide cold sea,  
They brought bonny Scotland across the  
world to me;  
And my heart knew the heather that my  
sense had never smelt,  
And my spirit drank the hill wind my brows  
had never felt.

From the old kind books came the old  
    friends trooping,  
And the old songs called, like the curlew  
    swooping;  
And like a sudden sup that was hot and  
    strong and sweet,  
The love of bonny Scotland, it ran from  
    head to feet.

O blessings on the heather hills, in white  
    mist or sun!  
O blessings on the kind books that make  
    the clans as one!  
And blessings on the bagpipes whose magic  
    spanned the sea,  
And brought bonny Scotland across the  
    world to me!

## WHEN THE ROSES GO DOWN TO THE SEA

ON Gloucester moors the roses  
    Bloom haunted of the bee;  
But there comes an hour of the summer  
    With the ebb-tide running free,  
In a blue day of the summer,  
    When the roses go down to the sea.

The hands of the little children  
    Carry them to the shore;  
The folk of the City of Fishers  
    Come out from every door;  
They remember the lost captains  
    That shall come to the port no more.

They remember the lost seamen  
Whose names the chaplain reads;  
Old English names of Gloucester  
Are told like slipping beads,  
And the names of the fearless Irish lads,  
And Portuguese and Swedes.

They remember the lost fishers  
Who shall come no more to the land,  
Nor look on the broad blue harbor,  
Nor see the Virgin stand,  
Our Lady of Good Voyage,  
With the sailing-ship in her hand.

They pray to the Friend of fishers  
On the Sea of Galilee  
For the souls and bodies of seamen  
Wherever their voyages be;

And singing they send the roses

On the ebb-tide down to the sea.

And the lost seamen and captains,

Wherever their bodies be,

If ever the sight of a mortal rite

Can move a soul set free,

Are glad of the kindness of Gloucester,

Their old sea-city of Gloucester,

Are moved with the memory of Gloucester,

When the roses go down to the sea.



## RITUAL FOR SUMMER DEAD

AUGUST turns autumnal now:  
Scarlet the sudden maple-bough  
At the turn of the wood-road gleams;  
On the hearth the gray log sings  
Sleepy songs of vanished things—  
Babbling, bubbling John-a-Dreams.  
August is autumn now.

Find the field where, dead and dry,  
Under the broad still noontide sky,  
Bleached in the flow of the bright-blue  
weather,  
Stalks of the milkweed stand together.  
Take the pale-brown pod in hand,

Packed with seeds of silvery feather;  
Wander dreaming through the land.  
Let each silken plumelet sift  
Through the fingers, drift and drift,  
Touched with the sun to rainbow light—  
Float—and float—and out of sight!

So might incense drift away.  
Golden Summer is dead to-day.  
As a pious thurifer  
Swing the censer meet for her.

## RED OCTOBER

RED October, and the slow leaf sailing;  
All the maples flaring scarlet splendor,  
All the dogwoods glowing crimson glory,  
All the oak-leaves bronze, the beech-leaves  
golden:

Blue, ah blue! the reaches of the river,  
Blue the sky above the russet mountain,  
Blue the creek among the tawny marshes,  
Blue the tart wild-grape beside the hill-  
road:

At our feet the burnished chestnut shining;  
Scent of autumn, and the brown leaves'  
rustle;

Cloudy clematis among the brambles,  
Orange bittersweet along the wayside.

Days too-perfect, priceless for their passing,  
Colored with the light of evanescence,  
Fragrant with the breath of frailest beauty—  
Days ineffable of red October!

## THE SINGER CHOOSES THE SONGS OF THE WIND

HENCEFORTH I will sing no songs  
But the songs that are fluent, irregular,  
    swift, unguided:  
I will turn no tunes but the tunes of the winds  
    and the waters.  
I know that the song of the bird is remem-  
    bered, it changes not;  
And I know that the song of the wind is  
    unremembered;  
But it stirs the ground of the heart while  
    the song is a-singing,  
And it flows from a vaster source than the  
    song of the bird.

So I will sing the song of the wind in the  
    long grass, by the river,  
And the song of the wind in the dry and  
    copper-brown oak-leaves,  
In the autumnal season, so beautiful and sad,  
And the song of the wind in the green cool  
    ranks of the corn  
As it stirs very lightly in the summer,  
And the song of the wind in the pines, when  
    the shadows are blue on the snow,  
And the song, song, song, of the wind in the  
    flapping flag,  
And the winter-night song of the wind in the  
    chimney,  
And the swelling, lulling song of the swirling  
    wind of the sea  
That is blent with the plunge of the sea.

## THE GLEAM TRAVELS

It is morning, and April.

(They sleep, but I am alive and awake—  
the soft warm lucent blue of the spring  
heaven bathes my soul.)

There, and again there, the willow-veils  
hanging, golden-green, tremulous,

Near by, the bright red-bronze of the lifted  
cherry-boughs, flashing in the sun,

Far off, gray-purple of the woods warming  
to life;

The clouds floating—O so full of light and  
blessing, that I think they live and love,

Or truly that they are beautiful veils, not  
all hiding that which lives and loves!

Morning, and April,

And on the far-away road, hither leading,  
the road but now gray with the cloud-  
shadow,

The gleam travels.

Hitherward the gleam travels;

Behind it lies the gray shadow on the hill.

O life immense! O love unspeakable! O  
large To-day!

O moment of utterance given to me (the  
shadow too travels),

O moment of joy, of trust, of song for my  
soul, and for those who sleep, and for  
those who shall by and by wake!

Life,

Morning, and April—

Hitherward the gleam travels!



## THE GRAY VICTORY

ON the top of a great rock,  
A rounded boulder with rust-colored stains,  
Set high over the blue-green of the bay,  
Braced strong with iron against the strong  
    salt wind,  
The old, gray figurehead is left.

Does any one know who set it there, so high?  
Some sailor-fisherman  
Who lived in a little hut beside the rock.  
The hut is gone, there are the bricks of its  
    foundation,  
The old, gray figurehead is left.

A carving crude yet noble,  
Of silvery, weathered wood:  
A hero-woman,  
Large, simple, bold and calm.  
One hand is on her breast, her throat curves  
proudly,  
Her head is thrown back proudly, she  
seems exulting;  
There is also in her look something  
strangely devout,  
Patient, and nobly meek.

What far-away workman made her, and  
what was his meaning?  
Was she a Victory? or Hope, or Faith?

She looks upon the sea:  
The bitter sea that cast upon these rocks  
Her ship of long ago.

Who knows what agony, who knows what  
loss

Is in her memory? What struggle of sailors  
In wild cold waves, at night?

With head thrown back

She looks upon the sea.

In every large curve of her broken body

Is trust, is triumph.

Against the sky she rises,

The light-filled, pure, ineffable azure sky;

Serene, unshaken,

Rises the Victory.

## FLAGS AND THE SKY

I LOOKED from my window:

I heard a whisper without from the rippling  
poplar,

I heard the wash of the river, its waves are  
never still;

I looked, and over the water the flag,  
Alive as the river, alive as the rippling  
poplar,

Rippled too in the wind.

The sun was upon it.

It had the beauty of flowers.

O flag, though you were not my own, I  
know I should love you:

I love all flowers, all flags:

Their colors in the wind flowing, in the sun  
brightening:

Deep blue of the night sky, or the splendor  
of flame,

Or green of spring, or the daring imperious  
scarlet,

The color of men's blood:

Their curious blazonry I love, heraldic, his-  
toric,

Leopard or eagle, stripe or star or raying  
sun,

Or the Cross of St. George and the Cross  
of St. Andrew,

Or whatsoever sign men have loved and  
followed.

For surely a flag has a soul.

It is a thing sacred as sunrise,

It is sacred as the stars.

The spirit of Man lifts it up into the sky  
That holds all stars, all flags.

I believe that a flag cannot be dishonored  
forever

By any deed of men.

Let it but fly awhile, and the wind will win-  
now it,

And the fierce pure sun will purge it, will  
wash it clean;

For the souls of races and nations live in the  
sky,

And are forever better than the deeds  
men do.

There was a man who burned with fire

The flag that he loved best,

Because he thought that out of its dead ashes  
Might rise the Flag of Man.

He would have to wait a long time for that  
 rising,  
 He would have to wait forever;  
 For live things do not rise out of ashes,  
 They rise out of live loves.

That man never knew that his flag had a  
 soul,  
 He never knew that the world needed the  
 soul in his flag,  
 And the souls in all flags.

The Flag of Man!  
 What should be its colors, in the wind flow-  
 ing, in the sun brightening?  
 And what should be its curious blazonry?

The upper field should be blue as the sky  
 of God:

The lower field should be red as the blood  
of Man:

And there should fly forever beside it—  
Always beside it, and neither above nor  
below it—

The one flag that a man is born to,  
Born of his mother to love and not to leave,  
As he loves his mother and will not leave her.

The Flag of Man!

It is long a-weaving.

God speed the weaving, and Man speed the  
weaving!

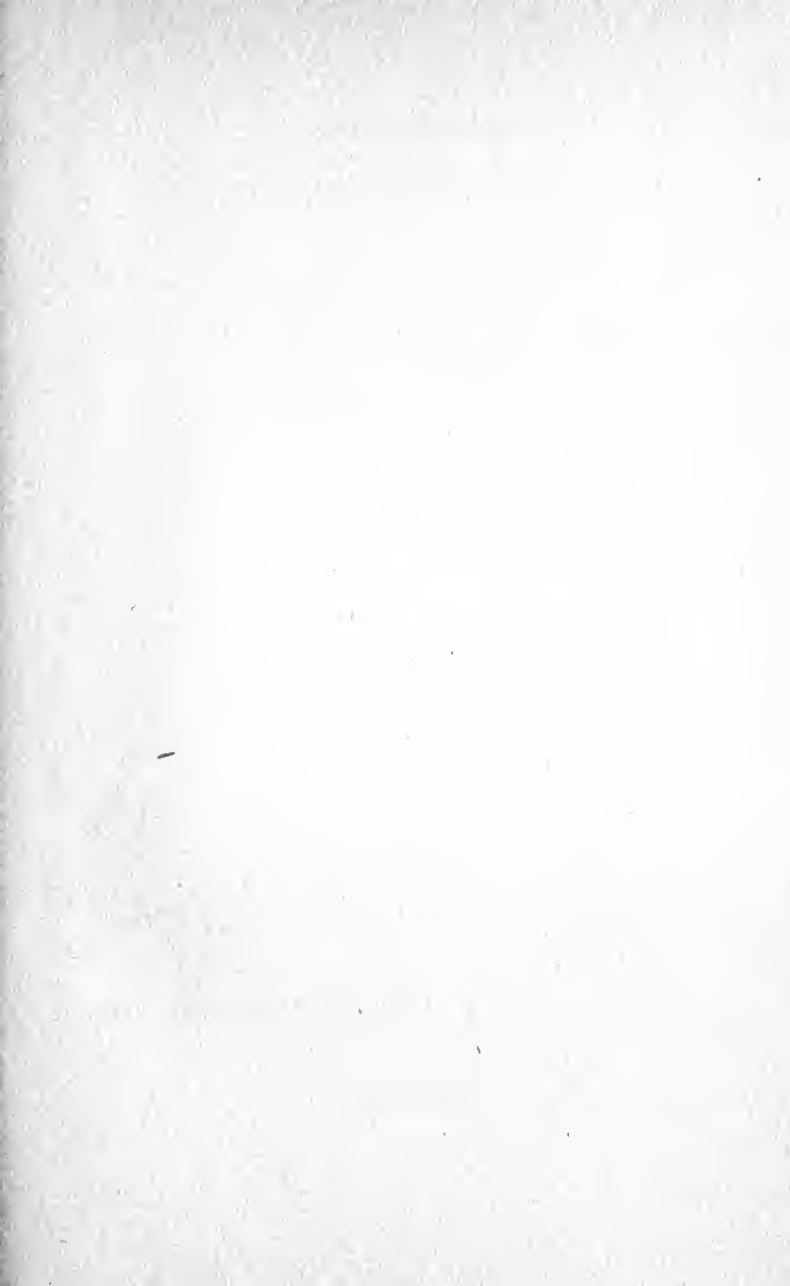
Let every one of us go on weaving that  
flag in his heart;

Perhaps, when the grass is rippling over the  
grave of him,

It may ripple in the sky that holds all stars,  
all flags,

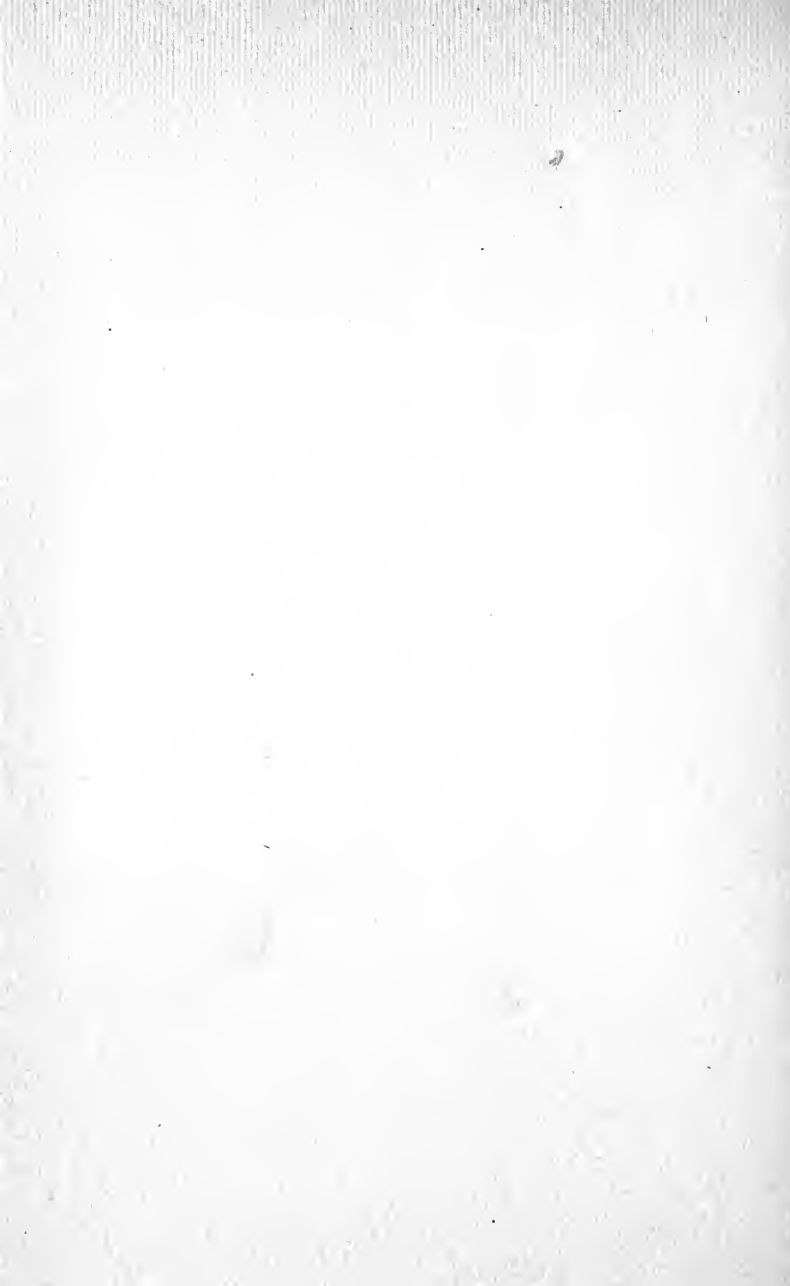
The Flag of All Souls.















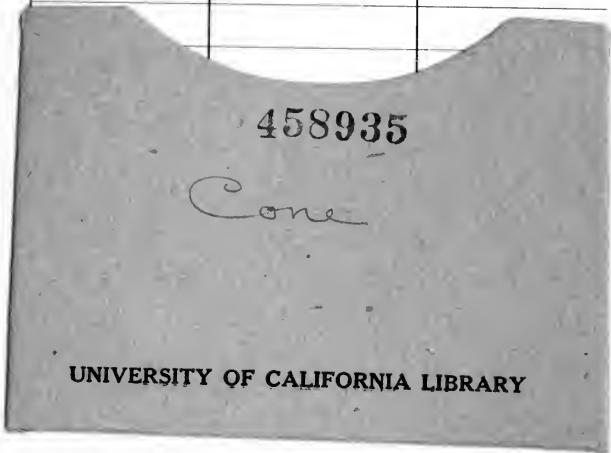
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